

The Challenge

Sierra Army Depot, Herlong, California

March 2004

Vol. 61 No. 2

Welcome home Colonel Plemmons



SIERRA ARMY DEPOT, HERLONG, CALIF.—February 5 Maj. General Ross Thompson III awarded Col. Paul R. Plemmons, Commander of Sierra Army Depot the Bronze Star Award for exceptionally

meritorious achievement while serving as the Commander of the Tank Automotive and Armament Command's Forward Repair Activity in Iraq. Additionally Plemmons served to secure Captured Enemy Ammunition. He was the senior Explosive Ordnance and Disposal Officer during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Plemmons' leadership, technical, tactical and logistics expertise was essential to the successful establishment of the forward repair activity depot in theater and planning the disposal of 250,000 short tons of captured enemy ammunitions. His outstanding performance, devotion to duty and selfless service reflects distinct credit upon himself, the coalition forces land component command and the U.S. Army. He served in Iraq for 10 months and said "It's great to be home again with family and friends".



General Paul J. Kern, Commander, U.S. Army Materiel Command takes a Deuce for a test drive at Sierra Army Depot in February.

SIAD begins production of HMMWV Armor Door Kits

By Susie Stevens
PAO, Sierra Army Depot

Sierra Army Depot, Calif.—Initially the depot will receive about 3.3 million-dollars to manufacture armor door kits for use on High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles or HMMWVs. Production and assembly of the kits has already begun. "The primary purpose of these kits is to protect soldiers from an array of munitions," according to James Manfred, Jr., Director of Mission Operations, Sierra Army Depot. "There are several locations nationwide that will help produce these kits and we are one of them. These doors will go to deployed units as soon as the kits come off our production line", said Vincent Sabatino Sr., Civilian Executive Assistant.

The depot is partnering with three area contractors to produce the kits. "The current plan is to utilize area contractors in California and Nevada to assist in the precision cutting of the armor door plating for the HMMWVs," said Manfred.

Congressman Jim Gibbons of Nevada reacted to this news by saying, "I am pleased to see that Sierra Army Depot is continuing to play a vital role in our nation's defense with the addi-

tion of this new service to our country's fighting men and women."

Senator Harry Reid of Nevada had these comments, "This is great news. This collaboration between Sierra Army Depot and Nevada contractors will be good for the economies of both California and Nevada, and good for the security of our entire nation."

"This is great news for Nevadans and Californians who will be able to do their part to protect the men and women defending our nation and the world," Senator John Ensign from Nevada stated.

Approximately 60 kits will be produced each week. The first shipment is due out in March. Each kit contains two (2) armor doorplates and other armor plating to be fitted to the vehicle after shipping. Sierra Army Depot currently has personnel deployed who will assist in replacing the current doors of the HMMWVs. Each kit weighs about 900-pounds. Each kit takes about 36 hours to produce. Assembly and painting of the armor door will be done here.



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Buddy Hassenplug and Leon Huffman, both welders, give General Kern a demonstration of some of the processes of building the HMMWV armored door kits.



A ceremony was held in February to commemorate a new flag pole set in front of the main headquarters building. Although it was raining and windy a large crowd gathered to honor the raising of the colors for the first time at this new location.

Commander's View

It is great to be back in the states again to be with family and friends. I'm glad to return to work as your commander.

This month I'd like to stress driving safety. Wearing a seat belt does save lives.

SEAT BELT SAFETY

I am concerned about traffic safety here. Speeds have increased and security is stepping up our enforcement efforts. Please slow down and drive carefully. With changing weather comes the need for increased safety not only at work but at home too.



Col. Paul Plemmons

Please remember that all drivers and passengers in California must wear a seat belt. The same is true here on the depot. Drivers or passengers who do

not wear a seat belt will receive a citation from protective services.

Army Safety Center, country

singers team up to save lives

The Army will begin a campaign with the mission of saving soldier's lives. It is set to kick off this summer in post movie theaters and on Armed Forces Network television with the help of country of music artists.

Planning for the "Drive to Arrive" campaign started early this year at the U.S. Army Safety Center at Fort Rucker, Ala., to combat the loss of soldiers in car accidents. Despite the decrease in fatalities, the Army's senior leadership started work on a program to reduce fatal car accidents further and increase soldiers' awareness of driving risks, said Jane Wise, command information manager at the Safety Center.

The Union's Position: AFGE, Local 1808

The new National Security Personnel System was not supported or indorsed by the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE). The National Office and all DOD Locals lobbied Congress not to enact this legislation but were unsuccessful in its attempts.

Overview:

NSPS was authorized by Congress in the fiscal year 2004 National Defense Authorization Act (signed by President Bush on November 24, 2003) and will be the new human resources management system for the DOD civilian workforce. By the law, 60 days after being signed into law DOD has to have its written description to the Employees Representatives (to the Unions by January 24th 2004). The law allows the Department of Defense to establish new rules for how civilians are hired, assigned, compensated, promoted, and



Jim Swistowicz
disciplined, within the framework of merit principles, accommodation of veterans' preference, and respect for employees' right to bargain. With that authority, the Department will develop a flexible and fair system that will help DoD attract, retain, reward, and grow a civilian workforce to meet the

national security demands of the twenty-first century.

Criteria. Sec. 9902(a)

- 1.) Be flexible and contemporary
- 2.) Not waive or modify Merit System Principles
- 3.) Not waive or modify Prohibitive Personnel Practices
- 4.) Ensure that employees may organize and bargain collectively
- 5.) Include a performance management system that is fair, credible, and transparent, linking performance management to the agency's strategic plan
- 6.) Provide adequate training on NSPS
- 7.) Provide effective safeguards to ensure that the system is fair and equitable.
- 8.) Ensure that the over all amount allocated for compensation in the civilian pay fund is not less than what it would have been under the former personnel system through fiscal year 2008.

The above information was taken from H.R. 1588, which is the Legislation passed by Congress and the NSPS Website; <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/index.html>

This is a first of a series of articles on the new National Security Personnel System for DOD employees. I will provide an update in my monthly column as information becomes available through the AFGE channels. If you have any questions regarding this subject, please feel free to give me a call.

Union meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at Bldg. 58, starting at 5:15 pm. All Bargaining Unit employees are welcome to attend. The Union Office phone number is extension 5375.

The Challenge

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Public Affairs Officer/Editor
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Mission Update Staff: Ruth Dowden/photographer, Meg Hill, Barb McGee

Col. Paul Plemmons
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fit space.

LEAN Initiative Continues at Sierra

By Rick Anderson
LEAN Office

With its inception in 2003, the LEAN concept has become a term with which many have become familiar with. In 2004, the LEAN initiative will continue to gain momentum, with the ultimate goal of achieving base wide participation. This will help in opening the door to certification of ISO 9001: 2000 at Sierra Army Depot.

Simpler Consultant, Mr. Robert Goldsmith visited Sierra, on Dec. 10-11, 03. His visit was to facilitate training for the LEAN core team in the preparation of events, forms and suggestions in general mentoring. He will be back from January 5-15, 2004 for a Rapid Improvement Event in the ordering process, followed by a Value Stream Analysis with long term storage.

Some of our accomplishments to date are:

1. Class VIII Medical Supplies: The teams set up 6S (Sort, Straighten,

Scrub, Standardize, Safety and Sustain), which resulted in reducing internal floor space by 3,500 square feet. They also reduced travel distance in the receipt process from 8.1 miles to 4.4 miles.

2. General Supplies (Receipt to Store): The teams also set up 6S in Bldg 304 which resulted in reducing internal floor space by 5,000 square feet, which enabled the receipt process to handle the increased workload demand. They also reduced their processing time from 26.68 hours to 8.53 hours, a productivity increase by 68% and a \$151,000 savings to date.

The Lean core team has collectively developed a checklist of compliance requirements. These checklists will be used in areas that have already started the LEAN process, as a key to measure progress. These visits will also provide an excellent opportunity for personnel to ask questions or request assistance in the transition from the old way of doing

things, to the LEAN process. the transition from the old way of doing things, to the LEAN process.

One of the most often asked question has been in the data collected on the Production Control Boards or PCB's. The measurable data collected, should be simple in nature. The data should include the number of hours worked against what is being measured. In other words, how long it took to complete any process. The value of the PCB is to supply the information required to analyze the programs, calculate the savings or cost avoidance. Without this data, Sierra would have been unable to show those savings from the General Supply process. This data must be consistently tracked to determine cost savings, and record problems that may arise during the process. All work areas at Sierra Army Depot should be using PCB's. These boards can be obtained from the Quality Engineering Office.

Base Realignment and Closure visitor



(From L-R) Richard Schmidt, Robert Stapp, Lori McDonald and William Wheeler look at configured loads while visiting Sierra Army Depot to gather information for the Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

Sierra Army Depot—February 2 William Le Wheeler, Senior Military Analyst, Alion Science and Technology organization, from Alexandria Virginia came to capture the breath and scope of the missions and operations in progress here. Wheeler's purpose was to understand what the depot does to support Department of Defense

customers.

Wheeler was able to see that the depot performs a variety of services to DOD agencies. "We do everything from exercising equipment while it's in storage to ensuring its operability when it's shipped to its destination. One project that will begin soon is to produce armor door kits for use on HMMWVs. Depot

staff will deliver and install the armor door kits. "We deploy functional experts that provide guidance to military and civilian operators on how to operate and properly maintain their equipment," Bill Bahl, strategic planner, SIAD, said.

The depot is available for military training exercises as needed. Wheeler was able to watch the Navy during its training exercise while it was in progress. "We are quickly able to adapt to the customer's requirements and rapidly deploy their assets to anywhere in the world from our airfield. We also support striker brigade units by assembling go-to-war kits that contain supplies such as water and Meals Ready to Eat that will help our Soldiers to survive anywhere in the world", Bahl explained. By the end of the day Wheeler left with a good understanding of the value SIAD adds to Department of Defense," Bahl said.

Safe Driver Awards

Directorate of Operations (Front Row L to R)—Kelly Vesterby, Mitch Palmer, Jerome Azzano, Chris Powers, Sue Villa, Jeff Swift, Paul St. Germain, Wayne Plaster, Lisa Swift, Carl Daks, Blake Marsters, Chet Long, Vicky Chaffee, Ron Hopkins, Jessica Azzano, Joyce Verity, Alton Carroll, Sandra Ray, Larry Larimer, Danny Colgain, Richard Chase, David Dixon, Terry Mossi, Bob Stapp Blaine Bruffett, Joseph Rausch, Adam Zamora, Mike Dahl, Bill Bauer, David Osborne.



No Lost Time Injury Awards

Utilities Branch of the Directorate of Public Works. (Back Row L to R) Dave Gentilcore, Ricky Ridenoure, Bob Bowen, Jeremiah Van Meter, Don Johnson, Dick Rock, Phil Gonzales, and Bernabe Asuelo.



No Lost Time Injury Awards

Equipment Management & Maintenance Branch of the Directorate of Public Works (Back Row L to R) William Booher, Craig Wilde, Joe Horner, Dan Reid, John Paine. Kneeling – Lee Harris.



Safe Driving Awards

Fire & Emergency Services
Division (From Back Row L to
R) – Chris Zahara, Roby Dennis.
(Front Row L to R) – Charles
Lacombe, Barry Spratt, Norm
Jenkins, Grover White, Jose
Bonilla, Mike Hall, Greg Lompa.



No Lost Time Injury

Awards Directorate of
Information Technology
(Back Row L to R) – Allen
Vanderville, Kent
Hinderlider, Jim Toner,
Darren Dabell, Tamas
Judson, Chris Marquard,
Paula Taylor, Linda Cady,
Ken Rish.

Safe Driving Awards

(Front Row L to R) Visa
Endemann – Security Division,
Gary Yustat, James Vinson, John
Colberg, Patti Danner, Carol
Gordon, Walt Zinko, Ray Turek,
Larry Duncan, Melani Tescher –
Directorate of Public Works, Al
Jones uality Engineering.



**WELCOME NEW
EMPLOYEES!**

New Mission employees are: Benjamin Ausmus, Roger Bailey, Robert Boulanger, James E. Brown, James W. Brown, Jamie Calvert, John Cartier, Nancy Child, Jesse Clark, Mary-Katherine Costello, James Goss, Andre Guerrero, Billie Heckenliable, Even Heckenliable, Jeffery Honea, Victor Hranac, Tammy Jacobs, Ricky Johnson, Michael McDaniel, Timothy Micone, Waylon Musnicki, Benjamin Oakley, Mitchell Palmer, Bruce Pfeiffer, Michael Pryor, James Rebentisch, Scott Rode, Thomas Rowland Jr., Donald Scarpa, Chris Sheets, Mark Shephard, Alex Sibley, Stephen Shipley, Sherie Trone, Kimberly Tschirhart, Henry Tucker, Robert Watts, John Wilson, John Worrick, Keith Young. *Welcome one and all!*

ANTICIPATED VACANCIES

Program Manager, GS-0340-13/Director's Office
Logistics Management Specialist, GS-0346-11
Production Controller, GS-1152-9/Temp Promote
Production Controller, GS-1152-7/9 - Upward Mobility
Production Controller, GS-1152-9/11 - Upward Mobility
Industrial Arts Specialist, GS-1101-7/8 - Upward Mobility

DIRECTORATE PROMOTIONS

Kathy Ayers: was promoted to the Business Development Office in the position of Logistics Program Manager

Jayne Lawrence: was promoted to PP&C as an Management Program Analyst (welcome back Jayne)

Benny Morrow and **Kurt Hewitt:** were both promoted to Production Controller positions in PP&C

Joann Davis: was temporary promoted to Secretary, Director's Office

Have you attended a job interview lately and have not heard anything on a selection? Well, you are in good company. Selections have been made but are currently on "hold", until further notice. Will keep you posted!

**Industry Mobilizing to Produce
up-armored HMMWVs**

MISHAWAKA, Ind. (Army News Service, Feb. 18, 2004) – Humvee production in February has ramped up from 25 to 30 vehicles daily at an AM General factory in order to meet the demand in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee visited the plant Feb. 13, located about 10 miles east of South Bend, Ind. He thanked workers for their service to the nation, and reinforced their resolve to get the best Humvees to the troops as fast as possible.

Today the work ethic at the factory is much as it was at manufacturing plants across America during World War II. Then U.S. industry produced a staggering amount of materiel for the war effort, including 350,000 jeeps, Brownlee told plant officials.

About 1,200 AM General workers in northern Indiana base their livelihoods on Army contracts to build the High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles, better known as Humvees. The company has produced more than 170,000 Humvees since the vehicle was introduced in 1985, according to company spokesman Craig C. Mac Nab.

President George W. Bush's proposed 2005 defense budget earmarked millions of dollars for up-armored Humvees. Hundreds of others have already been approved for production this fiscal year, so AM General president and chief executive Jim Armour has been preparing for an increased workload to ultimately speed delivery of the Humvees to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In 2000, the Army awarded a seven-year contract to AM General for the production of some 31,474 Humvees through 2007.

When the new Humvees leave the plant in Mishawaka, some of them go to O'Gara-Hess & Eisenhardt, a leading vehicle armoring firm near Cincinnati. Brownlee also visited this plant in Fairfield, Ohio, where the vehicles become up-armored Humvees, known as the M1114 version Humvee.

Roughly 3,500 up-armored Humvees have been produced to date and are being used in peacekeeping missions in Somalia, Haiti, the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq, O'Gara-Hess officials report.

The M1114 weighs about 2,000 pounds more than the standard Humvee and includes 200-pound steel-plated doors, steel plating under the cab and several layers of bonded, ballistic-resistant glass to replace zip-up plastic windows, said Jim Bussey, O'Gara-Hess project manager.



Richard Schmidt (Supervisor) explains what LTS (Long Term Storage) means to Sierra.

**Quote of the Month**

"One of the tests of leadership is the ability to recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency." Arnold Glasgow



Local Boys and Girls Club Fine Arts Exhibits

Local Boys & Girls Club Fine Arts Exhibit produces winners to go on and compete on a regional level. CYS has hosted this event for several years with the help of Sierra Central Credit Union, which allows for the display of the art work. Ms Mickey Matthews and Ms. Mary Young volunteered to judge the entries. In the past some of our youth have placed at the national level. The winners are divided into age groups and are as follows: Audnae McGinnis, Tyler Fuller, 9 & under, Jazmine Quezada, Amanda Siegfried and Michael Richards, 10 -12 yrs old, Heaven Owens 13 - 15 yrs old, KT Clemans 16 -18 years old.

CYS also hosted a Hoop-Shoot for the local schools. Winners then participated at the next level. One of our members, Kirsten Croghan was the winner at Diamond View for her age group in the annual contest sponsored by the Elk's Lodge. She went on to the regional in Portola on 17 Jan. and placed fourth. Congratulations!

March Youth Community Projects

CYS MS/Teen's are bringing in the month of March with new ideas and great community projects. Past community projects include crocheting hats and scarves for leukemia patients, 4-H recycling, and knitting booties for preemies.

This month CYS is hosting a photography contest March 22-25, 3 on 3 basketball tournament, dance, and fear factor challenge, dates TBA. Children's Easter party will be held April 3, all families (whether members or nonmembers) are welcome to participate and join in on the fun. MS/Teen's are now in the process of redecorating the teen room, you're welcome to come on down and check it out. Jennifer Castodio, Trisha Miller, Brian Blickenstaff, Frank Vigil,

Brittany Cleman, Kenny Berry, Heaven Owen, Juanita McCoy, and Oda Alabaca. Comier, Jazmine Quezada and Cheryl Weber. In January, the school-age youth were Brittany Cleman, Kenny Berry, Heaven Owen, Juanita McCoy, and Oda Alabaca. Comier, Jazmine Quezada and Cheryl Weber. In January, the school-age youth were making teddy bears as part of "Character Counts". They completed this community project in February by delivering the Bears to the emergency room at the Susanville Hospital. The intent was to put a smile on a youngster's face while they were being treated at the Emergency room.

(R-L) Col. Paul R. Plemmons, Commander of Sierra Army Depot welcomes Mr. Walter W. Hollis Deputy Under Secretary of the Army (Operations Research) in March. He was able to observe the Armor Door Protection Kits in production here.



Local teenagers meet to discuss community projects.



MWR Services

Skedaddle Inn/Conference Center

Skedaddle Inn Conference Center Lounge is open Thursday, 5 p.m. till the last customer leaves. The Skedaddle Inn Conference Center is equipped to cater large or small events.

Call the manager at 4360 or mail Raul.Granados@sierra.army.mil
Hours: M-F, 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sierra Lodge/Guest House

Call the lodging manager, 4544, or raul.Granados@sierra.army.mil for information

Sierra Bowling Center and Snack Bar

Open everyday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Call 4442 for information. Check out the Lunch Specials Monday through Thursday. Delivery available on all orders received before 10:45am. Contact Jackie Weston-Chase to book your birthday packages and holiday parties. Dates fill up quick so plan early.

Physical Fitness Center

Open M- Thurs., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, Saturday, Sunday open from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The only charge to individuals is \$3 (per hour) for use of the Racquetball Court. ITR is available at the Physical Fitness Center. For more information call 4655 or email ok.fern@sierra.army.mil

Outdoor Recreation and Equipment Rental

For reservations and information call Tony Bruening at 4354.

Laundromat

Open daily, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. in building 142. Cost for wash \$1.25 and .25 cents for (15 minute drying). For your convenience, there is a machine with laundry supplies located inside the facility and also a change machine.

Recycling Center

Open M- Thurs., 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please call 4504 for more information.

Morale, Welfare and Recreation

Administrative Assistant can be reached at 4797, Monday-Thursday from 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email her at:

Regina.stauffer@sierra.army.mil
The business office can be reached at 4178, 4155 or 4609.

Herlong holds its first town meeting in years

HERLONG Calif.—There was standing room only for the large crowd of local residents and nearby towns people who met at the chapel here in January to discuss ongoing projects with Lassen County government officials. On the agenda for the community's first town hall meeting were: law enforcement, water, social services and the budget for new development. California state government spending woes are impacting upon Lassen county government plans and development and that was the message that the county board of supervisors conveyed. California's budget crisis will impact the county's budget for new or ongoing projects.

Californians will decide an important 15 billion-dollar bond in March. "The challenge will be to try and maintain our current level of services," said Jack Hanson Chairman Lassen County Board of Supervisors who presided over the meeting. Everything from road improvements to open grazing laws were among the concerns of local residents. "There are about 905 miles of road in the county," according to Transportation Department Director Larry Millar. Some

residents expressed hope that some roads would get paved; however it was said, "It's

a chore to just keep the existing paved roads in fair to good condition," according Millar.

Some of the chief safety issues raised at the meeting were: cattle and open range grazing, some highway speed limits especially near school bus stops. Residents wanted to know who to contact with complaints about road or traffic noise and speed. The California Highway Patrol is the agency that should be notified for these issues. For reports of crimes in progress the local sheriff will respond. Some residents had hopes of sometime soon having a local ambulance service and fire emergency service, but that will have to wait.

Next on the agenda was Mr. Vince Sabatino, Sr., Civilian Executive Assistant and acting commander of Sierra Army Depot who stated that a mong projects in progress at Sierra Army Depot are: "We're getting ready to move the gate to California Boulevard, he said.

"The good news is work at the depot continues to increase each year. A year ago we had about 400 employees and now we employ over 600 at the depot.

We're still the Army's primer distribution of petroleum and water systems, Sabatino said. The first data call for the Base Realignment and Closure process came in December and all 550 or so questions must be answered by February. All Department Of Defense installations and activities will be looked at during the BRAC process

Colonel Plemmons has returned from overseas duty. The next change of command will be sometime in 2005. "We want to be good neighbors and contribute all we can," said Sabitino. The recent flurry of job hiring has been for temporary positions resulting from Operation Refit that performs maintenance on equipment coming back from overseas deployment.



Marci Luond is busy ordering supplies for fuel and water programs. (Photo by: Ruth Dowden)

Commander's Safety Policy

By Maj. Gen. N. ROSS THOMPSON III

I am committed to maintaining the safety and health of each associate at the U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command. Each and every one of you contribute to the Army's readiness and modernization and a single loss due to injury reduces our ability to support our Soldiers. In addition, injury compensation programs take money away from programs addressing soldier lethality, mobility, survivability and sustainability needs.

Current OPTEMPO with increased workload and fast paced operations have also increased the number of safety related accidents TACOM-wide. This is a growing concern. In FY03, I directed all TACOM associates to complete Risk Management training by 1 Oct 03. The purpose of this training requirement was to develop a greater awareness of the hazards in our work

environments. The five-step risk management process enables us to identify, assess and control those hazards. Our completion rate for this training was 100%. This Safety Policy letter reiterates TACOM's goal to make risk management a routine part of our everyday activities.

Safety is everyone's responsibility! An effective safety and occupational health program is a joint effort led by the Command Group. The Safety Office provides administrative and technical guidance and ensures that the program complies with the Commander's intent and applicable rules and regulations (Department of Defense, Department of the Army, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration). The degree of success achieved in safety program management depends largely upon command visibility and accessibility of safety directors/managers to the command group.

I encourage all of you to work in a safe and healthy manner. Every one of you is important to accomplishing our mission so we can remain...Committed to Excellence - Supporting America's Warfighters.



Happy Easter

